



Remarks
Chargé Sandra Clark
Cashew Farmers and Processors Capacity Building Forum
Dakar, Senegal - Tuesday, March 22, 2016

(As prepared)

Good Morning Every One.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here this morning. Before I offer my remarks, I would like to acknowledge and recognize key officials here with us this morning.

His Excellency, Mr. Alioune Sarr, Minister of Commerce

Representative of the Minister of Agriculture

Mr. Amadou Abdoul Sy, General Director Market Regulation Agency (ARM)

Dr. Malick Diop, National Director of the Export Promotion Agency (ASEPEX)

Mr. Jean Charles Faye, Executive Director, National Funds for Agriculture and Livestock Development (FNDASP)

Mr. Lamine Sene, President of Cashew Value Chain Association (COFAC)

Mr. Olivier Edouardo Kabore, Representative of the African Cashew Alliance

Also, representatives from Governmental Institutions and Cashew Associations in Senegal, the Gambia and Guinea Bissau

Distinguished leaders and guests, it's a pleasure to be here this morning and to participate in this important forum.

I commend Boubacar Sow and his team for organizing this event, as well as for the great job the International Relief and Development (IRD) is doing in support of cashew value chain enhancement in Senegal.

And the timing of this capacity building workshop for cashew producers and processors, and other key players in the industry is ideal.

Under the “*Plan Sénégal Émergent*” (PSE), Senegal is striving to improve its business climate, increase investment in infrastructure, and develop Senegal into a regional hub for logistics, industry, and services. And as you all know, the Government of Senegal (GOS) has identified agriculture and agro-industry as a priority sectors for economic development under the PSE.

We applaud the launch of this program, as agricultural cooperation is an important element of the U.S. -Senegal relationship, where U.S. development cooperation is well-aligned with efforts by the Government of Senegal (GOS) to diversify and expand the economy.

Under President Obama’s Feed the Future initiative, USDA, USAID and other U.S. agencies are helping Senegal to develop and strengthen agricultural value chains, reduce malnutrition and strengthen food security.

Additionally, USDA and USAID Feed-the-Future programs are supporting the development of agriculture value chains with high potential for trade development.

Senegal is blessed with good climate, fertile soil and diverse land resources – all of which are critical to a successful agricultural sector, which can fuel income and job growth.

The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) support for cashew value chain enhancement projects in Kolda, Ziguinchor, Sedhiou and Fatick regions, exemplifies our commitment to supporting agricultural development in the country.

Over 20,000 small-holder cashew farmers and processors within major cashew growing regions in Senegal are expected to benefit from this program.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is supporting policy reforms to improve the investment climate.

As one of the world’s leading agricultural producers, the United States of America has a great deal of technical experience to share, and we are committed to working with Senegal to advance our shared goal of greater economic prosperity.

In closing, I would like to state that as Senegal works to diversify its economy and develop a vibrant agricultural sector, the U.S. government and private sector interest groups stand ready to help in any way possible.

Thank You.